



SOUTHEAST NEWS

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Planned Giving Program Begins In Conference

The Southeast Conference has officially launched a planned giving program.

Under the leadership of James Mason, a member of the United Church of Huntsville, AL, a planned giving committee is being organized following the approval of the Conference Board of Directors in September.

"It's an exciting program," said Mason, a retired school administrator. "I'm anxious to tell the churches about it."

Planned giving provides opportunities through the United Church Foundation to invest in annuities and pooled income funds. The investments benefit selected individual churches, programs of the Southeast Conference, and boards and institutions of the United Church of Christ.

It also provides opportunities to make wills to church-related beneficiaries.

"Planned giving is really an educational program," he said. "For example, there are many ways you can make an investment, and get a good return. And church members can do something for the church and the UCC other than leave an empty pew."

Mason attended a UCC training session this past year for planned giving. In January, he hopes to begin visits to churches to talk about the Conference's new program.

For further information or to schedule a visit, he can be reached in Huntsville at (205) 881-4391.

Ms. Lawrence Joins Conference Staff

Alice F. Lawrence joined the staff of the Southeast Conference as administrator in September.

A resident of Avondale Estates, GA, Ms. Lawrence was formerly vice president of administration of Trident Corporate Services, Inc., of Atlanta, GA.

Congregation Anticipates the Future With New Pastor and New Church Name

Gwinnett Community United Church of Christ began Advent this year in a special way—by installing a new pastor.

That's not the only thing new at the Lilburn, GA church—there's the name, for example. Formerly Button Gwinnett United Church of Christ, the congregation voted in October to rename itself Gwinnett Community.

And there's a new beginning.

Begun in 1979 in fast-growing Gwinnett County, the church fell on hard times during the mid-1980s, falling behind on building loans and losing half of its members.

In fall 1990, a new covenant was approved by the Board for Homeland Ministries, the Southeast Conference and the congregation to permit a fresh start.

The covenant provided a new three-year subsidy, loans for building improvements and the calling of a pastor who could help the church grow again.

In August, the church called the Rev. Gerald R. O'Connor.

Since then, they haven't paused for a breath. A new worship center was built in the sanctuary; a new sign was designed; a sound system was installed; the lighting was redesigned; the kitchen was remodeled and new appliances put in; new blinds were installed; drywall was repaired; and new chairs were put in the sanctuary.

And most importantly, 11 new people have joined.

"Some might say we lost our marbles by trying to do so much in such a short time, but we haven't lost our marbles, just our Button," jokes the Rev. O'Connor.

Volunteers Make It A 'Happening' For BWM

More than 100 volunteers from churches of the Southeast Conference made the 182nd Annual Meeting of the United Church Board for World Ministries in November into a happening.

"The Southeast Conference set an outstanding benchmark in the rich resource of a Conference assisting the 'happening' of a Board annual meeting," said Scott Libbey, Executive Vice President of the World Board. "You demonstrated the manner in which a tremendous number of people had the sense of their own witnesses."

The World Board drew over 400 corporate board members, staff and missionaries to Atlanta on Nov. 8-13 under the theme of "You Shall Be My Witnesses."

Under the leadership of the Rev. Joyce Myers-Brown, 22 subcommittees from the Southeast Conference worked on hospitality for the gathering of the nation's oldest foreign mission board.

Volunteers baked 750 dozen cookies, greeted at the airport, organized a Sunday festival procession from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and led a worship service at nearby First Congregational Church, UCC.

"It was an unusual privilege to be hosts," said the Rev. Roger D. Knight, Conference Minister. "We had the World Board into our own Conference 'living

room' as they sang, prayed, deliberated and decided on God's will in being instruments of mission to the world.

"Thanks is expressed to all the persons, churches, board of directors, pastors and staff for their participation in hosting our brothers and sisters," said Rev. Knight.

Among volunteer leaders were: Dave Menchhofer and Billy Bell, airport greeters; Pilgrimage UCC, Beth Knight and Trudy Braun, hospitality suite; Essie Holman, registration; Jean Hess, banners; Ginny McCamey, housing; Revs. Houston Wheeler and Carol Jean Miller, mission orientation; Rev. Floyd Carmack, church visitations; Erna Bryant, Conference presentation; Alexis Scott Reeves and Rev. Andrew Young, King Center program; Revs. Tim Morrison and James Myers, festival procession and worship; and Frances Smith and Bob Johnson, Eucharist service.

CONFERENCE COMMENTS: ' ... The Lord is Come ...'

Dear Friends:

"... The Lord is Come ..."

That hymn sung joyously for all the world this Advent is our acknowledgment that God has undeniably acted and that our hunger and longing has been fulfilled.

With the assurance of those words, Jesus' followers were to change the world. And they changed the world in the way Jesus did: with sacrificial service, and with acts of compassion and justice.

Last month, the Annual Meeting of the United Church Board of World Ministries in Atlanta had as its theme, "You Shall Be My Witnesses."

The theme was appropriate. We heard a feast of stories of God's love from missions throughout the world. The board and its people are part of the Lord's universal table. They are partners in reconciliation and justice, and witnesses of God's sacrificial gift of love in Jesus.

But I was pained deeply to learn that 14 mission personnel would not be replaced because of the lack of funds. Other examples of critical needs seared my conscience.

I thought immediately of the turmoil and squabbles in some churches over what usually are petty issues and personal preferences. Oddly, I couldn't recall an instance where a church had a conflict over not having enough commitment, or not having enough giving, or not having enough mission.

Churches who are not committed, not giving and not in mission, echo emptily with loud voices of dissent. Churches who are committed, are giving and are in mission, ring with the sounds of life. They have accepted to Jesus' invitation to sacrificial service, "Be My Witnesses."

That brings us back to the words of the Christmas song " ... the Lord is Come ..." If the Christ has come (which we all profess as Christians), then why do many not live as if Jesus had truly come? The Kingdom of God is a reality, yet many withhold themselves from it. Many still live in racial and class divisions. Many still

rely on militarism even as it breaks us economically. Many still are divided over basic human needs of health, education and employment. Doesn't it sometimes look like Jesus and the Kingdom of God never came?

We can choose to live on two different sides of Christmas. On one side, we can live always waiting for Christmas and the Kingdom of God. Or on the other side, we can live as if Christmas and the Kingdom of God have come.

In the joyous words of the hymn, you can live as if Christ's reign of justice, service and compassion has been accompanied, that indeed, "... The Lord is Come ..."

We are thankful for these events in 1991:

- for the 25th Annual Meeting with UCC President Paul Sherry, former Conference Ministers, and much celebration;

- for the VISIONS '91 campaign, and the commitment of many to underwrite future ministries of the Conference;

- for the Evangelism Institutes and their vitality;

- for the growth of churches in members and worship attendance;

- for the Conference's award for the highest per capita giving to all-church offerings.

- for the emerging realization of the importance of OCWM, and the increased amount to the wider church, and;

- for the many who gave of themselves in service and caring.

Shalom,
Roger Knight

PROFILES IN CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

By Mitchell Johnson, Associate Conference Minister

With the coming joy of Christmas, there is good news in church development.

At Chattanooga, TN, we are about to call a pastor for a new church start. This project was approved in 1990 by the Southeast Conference and the United Church Board of Homeland Ministries.

It was originally conceived as a relocation of First Congregational Church, an African-American church in Chattanooga. At present it is emerging under the powerful influence of the "Amistad" and the Brainerd Mission traditions to be a renewed presence of faith and hope among other established churches in the city.

The planning committee consists of people from other churches who each answered the invitation on their own to join others in helping to establish this church in a carefully selected location on the growing edge of Chattanooga.

We have felt and been assured of the prayers and support for this strategically important move.

Meanwhile, Button Gwinnett Church in Lilburn, GA, has lost its "Button." This northeast Atlanta church in one of the nation's fastest-growing counties is awakened to new challenges and possibilities for its ministry.

The church has been Gwinnett Community United Church of Christ. But under the leadership of a new pastor, Rev. Gerald O'Connor, the changes go beyond that. Refurbishing, new furnishings and new carpeting are only the beginnings for a church that is extending itself to embrace the people of its growing community.

This church has started to be an example of spiritual renewal wedded to inspired leadership and support. It is in covenant with the Conference and UCBHM to move forward through the power and guidance of God.

Alabama Meetings Pick New Officers, Reject Synod Stand

The South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association and the East Alabama-West Georgia Association elected new officers at their Annual Meetings in October.

In addition, the East Alabama association passed a statement rejecting Resolution 67 by the 18th General Synod in June on the ordination of homosexuals.

"With careful searching of the scriptures we find no references where people openly living in sinful ways should be permitted to become our spiritual leaders," the Association statement stated.

In rejecting the Synod call on churches and associations to further the ministry of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons, East Alabama asked the General Synod to rescind its resolution.

The action by the General Synod, one of several over the past two decades, has no practical effect since associations in the UCC decide on persons for ministry, based on the *Manual on Ministry*.

Keynote speaker for the East Alabama meeting at the Children's Harbor facility in Alexander City, AL, was David Ray, an expert on small churches and a member of the Iowa Conference staff.

Meeting at Pyron Chapel in Baker, FL, the South Alabama group heard former missionaries Dick and Nancy Sales on their experience in southern Africa and the forthcoming Atlanta meeting of the Board of World Ministries.

Elected to offices in East Alabama were: Rev. Warren Blankenhorn, vice moderator; Donald Harmon, treasurer; and Challis Rhodes, secretary.

Also elected were Rev. Roy Bain, chair, Church and Ministry; Rev. John Schofield, chair, Stewardship; Rev. Jim Johnson, chair, Church Development; Rev. Wayde Washburn, chair, Social Justice; Rev. Roger Jones, chair, Christian Education; Mrs. Lena Dollar, chair, Women; and Donald Harmon, Conference Board of Directors.

Elected to offices in South Alabama were: Rev. Woody Clark, moderator; Jim Courtney, vice moderator; and Mozelle Brown, secretary and treasurer.

Also elected were Dale Foreman, chair, Christian Education; Rev. Joe Brown, Church and Ministry; Marvin C. Brand, Jr., chair, Outreach; Rev. Charles Melvin, chair, Church Development; Rev. J. T. Castleberry, chair, Social Justice; and Mrs. Virada Brand, chair, Women in Church.

OCWM RECEIPTS TO DATE

Third Quarter OCWM, September 30, 1991

CHURCHES	THIRD QTR	TOTAL 1991
ALABAMA-TENNESSEE TOTAL	21,972.01	60,395.95
Alpine, AL, King's Chapel	0.00	138.00
Athens, AL, Trinity	0.00	0.00
Belvidere, TN, First	1,482.12	3,089.21
Birmingham, AL, First	1,100.00	2,900.00
Birmingham, AL, Pilgrim	1,800.00	3,400.00
Chattanooga, TN, First	0.00	0.00
Chattanooga, TN, Pilgrim	5,346.00	14,256.80
Crossville, TN, United	500.00	2,726.50
Cullman, AL, St. John's	2,025.00	5,400.00
Deer Lodge, TN, Deer Lodge	300.00	900.00
Fairfield Glade, TN, Community	718.75	2,156.25
Garden City, AL, Garden City	115.50	346.50
Hanceville, AL, Mountain Grove	0.00	0.00
Huntsville, AL, United	1,400.00	5,600.00
Knoxville, TN, Church of the Savior	0.00	0.00
Marion, AL, First	0.00	50.00
Montgomery, First	1,900.00	1,900.00
Nashville, TN, First	833.34	2,916.69
Nashville, TN, Brookmeade	0.00	25.00
Nashville, TN, Howard	0.00	0.00
Pleasant Hill, TN, Community	4,371.00	13,121.00
Robbins, TN, Barton Chapel	0.00	300.00
Sunbright, TN, Glenmary	0.00	800.00
Sweetwater, TN, First	0.00	250.00
Talladega, AL, First	0.00	0.00
Tougaloo, MS, Union	0.00	0.00
Waverly, TN, United	80.00	120.00
EAST ALABAMA-WEST GEORGIA TOTAL	5,424.00	14,447.00
Alexander City, AL, First	76.00	266.00
Columbus, GA, United	0.00	0.00
Dadeville, AL, Elder	219.00	501.00
East Tallassee, AL, East Tallassee	0.00	0.00

Eclectic, AL, Watson's Chapel	0.00	0.00
Five Points, AL, State Line	0.00	47.00
LaFayette, AL, Pleasant Grove	293.00	754.00
LaGrange, GA, Hillside	0.00	0.00
LaGrange, GA, United	515.00	1,590.00
Lanett, Lanett	1,900.00	3,800.00
Langdale, AL, Langdale	95.00	380.00
Phenix City, AL, Russell Woods	855.00	1,140.00
Pine Mountain, GA, Oak Grove	475.00	950.00
Roanoke, AL, Antioch	0.00	571.00
Roanoke, AL, Bethany	0.00	0.00
Roanoke, AL, First	0.00	712.00
Roanoke, AL, Forest Home	0.00	0.00
Roanoke, AL, New Hope	0.00	570.00
Roanoke, AL, North Main	143.00	286.00
Roanoke, AL, Rock Stand	175.00	350.00
Valley, AL, Pine Forest	266.00	931.00
Valley, AL, Todd	0.00	0.00
Wadley, AL, Corinth	0.00	119.00
Wedowee, AL, Noon Day	0.00	0.00
Woodbury, GA, Jones Chapel	555.00	1,480.00
SOUTH ALABAMA-NW FLORIDA TOTAL	205.00	725.00
Andalusia, AL, Antioch	0.00	0.00
Andalusia, AL, First	110.00	330.00
Baker, FL, Good Hope	0.00	0.00
Baker, FL, Pyron	75.00	200.00
Bonifay, FL, New Effort	0.00	0.00
Brantley, AL, Indian Creek	0.00	0.00
Brantley, AL, Liberty	0.00	0.00
Clio, AL, New Hope	0.00	0.00
Headland, AL, Blackwood	20.00	195.00
GEORGIA-SOUTH CAROLINA TOTAL	9,016.65	40,265.27
Atlanta, GA, Carroll Heights	0.00	0.00
Atlanta, GA, Central	5,600.00	22,400.00
Atlanta, GA, First	0.00	5,500.00
Atlanta, GA, Rush	0.00	0.00
Atlanta, GA, UCC	0.00	0.00
Barnesville, GA, Fredonia	0.00	0.00
Beachton, GA, Evergreen	0.00	495.00
Braselton, GA, Macedonia	0.00	0.00
Buford, GA, Duncan's Creek	0.00	0.00
Charleston, SC, Circular	999.00	2,666.68
Charleston, SC, Plymouth	0.00	1,160.00
Columbia, SC, Pilgrim	0.00	0.00

Demorest, GA, Federated	0.00	226.94
Dewey Rose, GA, Liberty	0.00	150.00
Jonesboro, GA, Trinity	1,500.00	3,000.00
Lilburn, GA, Button Gwinnett	0.00	0.00
Macon, GA, First	0.00	0.00
Marietta, GA, Pilgrimage	416.66	1,666.53
Midway, GA, Midway	200.00	600.00
Savannah, GA, First	300.00	600.00
Thomasville, GA, Bethany	0.00	300.00

Closing date for 1991 OCWM receipts is Jan. 14.

Visions '91 Effort Heads For Deadline on Dec. 31

The Visions '91 fund-raising campaign for the Southeast Conference had reached \$172,000 as of November.

The campaign, which continues until December 31, has a challenge goal of \$200,000, and a basic goal of \$150,000.

If the challenge goal is reached, funds earmarked for the Endowment Fund will be matched by a \$50,000 gift.

Visions '91 is a campaign to provide foundational funding to Conference activities, Funds will go to support new and renewed churches; leadership training; communication of identity and mission; a new Conference office; and a Conference endowment fund.

If the Conference reaches the Challenge goal, \$80,000 will go to new and renewed churches; \$40,000 to leadership training; \$16,000 to communicate identity and mission; \$24,000 to relocate and upgrade Conference facilities; and \$40,000 to an Endowment Fund.

The categories of giving are Visionary (\$10,000 and up); Pillar (\$5,000 to \$9,999); Cornerstone (\$2,500 to \$4,999); Partner (\$1,000 to \$2,499); Nurturer (\$500 to \$999); Supporter (\$100-\$499); and Foundation (\$1 to \$99).

Gifts may be directly or through three-year pledges. Gifts or pledges should be sent to Visions '91 Campaign, Southeast Conference, United Church of Christ, Box 29883, Atlanta, Ga. 30359.

Members of the Campaign Committee are Dr. Bryant, chair; Dr. James Mason; Ren Manning; Lala Allen; Barbara Everett; June Davis; Dick Woodward; James Myers; Rev. Floyd Carmack; Rev. Dick Sales; and Rev. Roy Bain, ex-officio.

A Letter from the Chair of Visions '91

Dear Friends:

Visions '91 completes its campaign on December 31. Already we can see the light at the end of the tunnel as we near our challenge goal.

The holidays will soon be here, and we trust that you will include Visions '91 in your plans.

You may wish to give a Christmas gift on behalf of a friend or in the name of a deceased beloved one. You may wish to consider your commitment as part of an annuity plan, or you may wish to donate stocks and bonds.

We can be successful!

Faithfully,
Dr. Erna Bryant

CHURCH AND PEOPLE NOTES

Fuller Speaks at Trinity Birthday

Millard Fuller, founder and president of Habitat for Humanity International, was the featured speaker at a 25th anniversary celebration at Trinity United Church, UCC, of Jonesboro, GA.

Trinity marked a quarter of a century of community service in Clayton County on Sunday, Nov. 3, with an anniversary service, reception, and dinner.

The church held its first service in November 1966 with 85 persons. First known as Bonanza United Church of Christ, the church established by the Rev. Floyd Carmack, the present pastor, later changed its name to Trinity United Church.

Eva Driscoll Dies at 82

Mrs. Eva Thomas Driscoll, a longtime church leader in the Georgia-South Carolina Association, died Oct. 7 at Greensboro Retirement Center in Greensboro, NC.

Mrs. Driscoll was a former vice moderator of the Georgia-South Carolina Association and a member of Central Congregational United Church of Christ in Atlanta.

She helped organize a Head Start program at Trinity Day Care Center in Decatur, GA, a program which serves 210 children and is still supported by Central Church.

Surviving is her husband, the Rev. Edward A. Driscoll of Greensboro, NC.

Nashville Marks Anniversary

First United Church of Nashville, TN, climaxed its yearlong 100th birthday celebration at a special dinner and anniversary service at Vanderbilt University Divinity School on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 26-27.

Participants in the worship service included Dr. Joseph Hough, dean of the Divinity School; the Rev. Peggy Way, professor at Eden Theological Seminary; and Dr. Holly Nelson, chaplain of Vanderbilt Medical Center.

First Church, one of the oldest churches in Nashville, was founded by Swiss immigrants in October 1891. The Rev. Bob Kurtz is pastor.

Festive Weekend at Pleasant Hill

Pleasant Hill Community Church of Pleasant Hill, TN held a Festival Weekend on Oct. 26-27 in conjunction with the installation of the Rev. Edward H. Schneider as pastor.

The Festival Weekend included a lecture by the Rev. Ronald S. Cole-Turner of Memphis Theological Seminary, a dinner on Sunday at Heritage Hall, and a chamber concert featuring pianist Ingebory Nisley and flutist Marianne Keller.

Brookmeade Aids Kurd Family

Brookmeade Congregational Church, UCC, is assisting a Kurdish refugee family which has been settled in Nashville through the United Church Board of Homeland Ministries Refugee Resettlement Office.

The Sadigh family is among 200 Kurds who are being resettled in middle Tennessee. The family consists of father Asmail and mother Baiss and five children.

The family stayed in the church's fellowship hall for four days and then temporarily with a church member before moving into a low-cost apartment furnished by the church.

Recent Pastoral Changes

Churches in Alabama and Georgia have had a number of pastoral changes this fall.

The Rev. Joe Brown, who has pastored several churches in south Alabama, has retired as pastor of Pyron Chapel in Baker, FL. Rev. Charles Melvin is serving the church.

William Lloyd has been licensed as pastor of Jones Chapel in Woodbury, GA, and David Speno, a seminary student at Candler School of Theology, is serving as interim pastor of Oak Grove Congregational Christian in Pine Mountain, GA.

The Rev. Dick Woodward is interim pastor of Bethany Congregational Church, UCC, in Thomasville, GA. Rev. Woodward has subsequently resigned as Conference vice moderator.

The Rev. Ralph Worley, a retired pastor, has been called by North Main Congregational Christian Church in Roanoke, AL, and the Rev. Warren Blankenhorn, also retired, is interim at First Congregational Christian Church in Alexander City, AL.

Wayne Cowhick has been called as licensed minister of Rock Stand Congregational Christian Church, Roanoke, AL.

OTHER NEW MINISTRIES: Rev. David Cleaver-Bartholomew was ordained Saturday, Nov. 30, as pastor of Fredonia Congregational Church in Barnesville, GA ... The Rev. Jerry Gladson was installed as Dean of the Institute for Psychological Studies in Atlanta at an installation service at Pilgrimage United Church of Christ in Marietta, GA.

AROUND THE CONFERENCE: Elder United Church of Christ in Dadeville, AL, celebrated a centennial of service as a church at a special service on Oct. 6 that drew 150 people ... Church of the Savior, UCC, in Knoxville, TN, fed over 100 homeless people at the city's Volunteer Ministry Center on Sept. 29 ... Antioch Congregational Christian Church in Andalusia, AL remodeled their downstairs fellowship hall and classrooms this summer.

Do you have church news to share? To make the February edition of the Southeast News, please mail a news release, church bulletin or newsletter by Jan. 15 to: Editor, Southeast News, Southeast Conference, United Church of Christ, Box 29883, Atlanta, GA 30359.

UPCOMING

Two classes will be offered by Eden Seminary faculty on Jan. 12-24 at Lake Byrd Conference Center in Avon Park, FL. Dr. Peggy Way will teach on "Family: The Metaphor, The Ministries, The Learnings about Care within an Ecclesial Context," and Dr. Steve Patterson on "I Corinthians." Courses may be taken for credit or audited as continuing education units. Call the Rev. James E. Boler at 1-800-827-6683.

"Men Against Violence," an invitational workshop and training session for pastors and other clergy, will be held Jan. 27-30 at Camp Sumatanga in Gallant, AL. The session is sponsored by the United Church for Homeland Ministries and the Conference's commissions on Women in Society, Church and Ministry, and Social Justice.

The Florida Conference and Southern Association of United Church Educators (SAUCE) will hold the Southern Region's first church educators program on Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at Lake Byrd Conference Center, Avon Park, FL. Donald Griggs of Griggs Educational Service of Livermore, CA, is leading the continuing education event. Contact the Rev. James E. Boler at (813) 923-4286 for information.

The Clergy and Spouse Retreat of the Southeast Conference will be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 21-23 at Shocco Springs Retreat and Conference Center, Talladega, AL, with the theme "Nurturing the Love that Sustains Us." The Revs. Jim Norris and Michael Small are co-chairs.

Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta holds its 13th annual Church Music Workshop on March 27-28. Principal presenter will be John R. Ferris, retired organist and choir master for Harvard University. For information, call Steven Darsey at (404) 727-5607.

The Third Evangelism Institute for churches in the Southeast Conference is scheduled April 2-4 in Atlanta. The institute is sponsored by the Conference and the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.

OFFICIAL MEETINGS: The Program Committee of the Board of Directors (Commission chairpersons) meets at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 4, at the Conference office in Atlanta .. The Commission on Christian Education meets Jan. 24-25 in Atlanta with Homeland Board curriculum staff person Pat Goldberg at the planning and training meeting ... The Conference's Board of Directors meets Friday and Saturday, Jan. 30-Feb. 1, at location to be named.

THE SOUTHEAST NEWS

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Tony Healy, Editor

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This transcription was recorded on August 3, 4, 5, and 6, 2013 by Mike Stroud, director of Project 66-16, an initiative to record, compile and write the history of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

